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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/733,316	12/12/2003	Daisuke Katsuta	501.43326X00	9072
20457	7590	04/20/2006	EXAMINER	
ANTONELLI, TERRY, STOUT & KRAUS, LLP 1300 NORTH SEVENTEENTH STREET SUITE 1800 ARLINGTON, VA 22209-3873				NELSON, FREDA ANN
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
		3639		

DATE MAILED: 04/20/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/733,316	KATSUTA ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Freda A. Nelson	3639	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 January 2006.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-4, 8-12 and 31-38 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) 31-38 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-4 and 8-12 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) 1 is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

The amendment received on January 26, 2006 is acknowledged and entered. Claims 1-4 and 8-12 have been amended. Claims 5-7 and 13-30 have been canceled. Claims 31-38 have been added. Claims 1-4, 8-12, and 31-38 are currently pending.

Response to Amendments and Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-4, 8-12, and 31-38 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Election/Restrictions

Newly submitted claims 31-38 are directed to an invention that is independent or distinct from the invention originally claimed for the following reasons:

1. Invention II, Claims 31-38, drawn to a method of transmitting images of welded parts 4 and 8-12, is classified in class 705, subclass 26; and the invention originally claimed (Invention I) which includes claims 1-14, and 19-24, are drawn to a method for conducting electronic commercial transactions through a commercial network, is classified in class 705, subclass 1.
2. In the instant case the different inventions, have different modes of operations functions.
3. Since applicant has received an action on the merits for the originally presented invention, this invention has been constructively elected by original

presentation for prosecution on the merits. Accordingly, claims 33-46 are withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. See 37 CFR 1.142(b) and MPEP § 821.03.

Claim Objections

4. Claim 1 is objected to because of the following informalities:
5. Claim 1, line 21, "checking" should be "checked".

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

6. Claims 1-4, and 8-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.
7. As per Claims 1-4 and 8-12, these claims recite a series of steps and are considered for the purpose of analysis under 35 U.S.C. 101 as reciting a series of steps. The claims do not recite an pre- or post-computer activity but merely perform a series of steps of imaging, subjecting, detecting, transmitting, receiving, checking, and storing images and is directed to non-statutory subject matter. A process is statutory if it requires physical acts to be performed outside of the computer independent of and following the steps performed by a programmed computer, where those acts involve the manipulation of tangible

physical objects and result in the object having a different physical attribute or structure. (*Diamond v. Diehr*, 450 U.S. at 187, 209 USPQ at 8). Further, the claims merely manipulate an abstract idea (imaging, subjecting, detecting, transmitting, receiving, checking, and storing images) or perform a purely mathematical algorithm without limitation to any practical application. A process which merely manipulates an abstract idea or performs a purely mathematical algorithm is non-statutory despite the fact that it might have some inherent usefulness (*Sakar*, 558 F.2d at 1335,200 USPQ at 139).

Furthermore, in determining whether the claimed subject matter is statutory under 35 U.S.C. 101, a practical application test should be conducted to determine whether a “useful, concrete and tangible result” is accomplished. See *AT&T Corp. v. Excel Communications, Inc.*, 172 F.3d 1352, 1359-60, 50 USPQ2d 1447, 1452-53 (Fed. Cir. 1999); *State Street Bank & Trust Co. v. Signature Financial Group, Inc.*, 149 F.3d 1368, 1373, 47 USPQ2d 1596, 1600 (Fed. Cir. 1998).

An invention, which is eligible or patenting under 35 U.S.C. 101, is in the “useful arts” when it is a machine, manufacture, process or composition of matter, which produces a concrete, tangible, and useful result. The fundamental test for patent eligibility is thus to determine whether the claimed invention produces a “use, concrete and tangible result”. The test for practical application as applied by the examiner involves the determination of the following factors”

- (a) “Useful” – The Supreme Court in *Diamond v. Diehr* requires that the examiner look at the claimed invention as a whole and compare any

asserted utility with the claimed invention to determine whether the asserted utility is accomplished. Applying utility case law the examiner will note that:

- i. the utility need not be expressly recited in the claims, rather it may be inferred.
- ii. if the utility is not asserted in the written description, then it must be well established.

(b) "Tangible" – Applying *In re Warmerdam*, 33 F.3d 1354, 31 USPQ2d 1754 (Fed. Cir. 1994), the examiner will determine whether there is simply a mathematical construct claimed, such as a disembodied data structure and method of making it. If so, the claim involves no more than a manipulation of an abstract idea and therefore, is nonstatutory under 35 U.S.C. 101. In *Warmerdam* the abstract idea of a data structure became capable of producing a useful result when it was fixed in a tangible medium, which enabled its functionality to be realized.

(c) "Concrete" – Another consideration is whether the invention produces a "concrete" result. Usually, this question arises when a result cannot be assured. An appropriate rejection under 35 U.S.C. 101 should be accompanied by a lack of enablement rejection, because the invention cannot operate as intended without undue experimentation.

The claims, as currently recited, appear to be directed to nothing more than a series of steps including imaging, subjecting, detecting, transmitting,

receiving, checking, and storing images without any useful, concrete and tangible result and are therefore deemed to be non-statutory. While these steps may be concrete and/or useful, there does not appear to be any tangible result.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

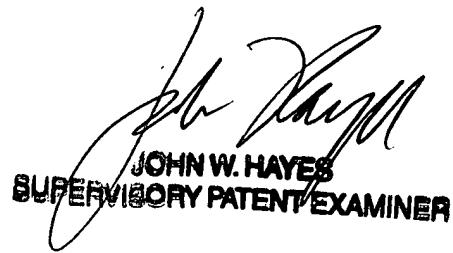
A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Freda A. Nelson whose telephone number is (571) 272-7076. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Hayes can be reached on 571-272-6708. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

FAN 04/17/2006

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Heda Nelson".A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John W. Hayes".

JOHN W. HAYES
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER